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SENATE MEMORIAL 69

51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2013

INTRODUCED BY

Cisco McSorley

A MEMORIAL

HIGHLIGHTING THE GROWING DRIVING- AND TRANSPORTATION-RELATED DANGERS IN NEW MEXICO AND REQUESTING THE TAXATION AND REVENUE DEPARTMENT TO FORM A COMMITTEE TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STATE TO IMPLEMENT A CONTINUING DRIVER EDUCATION PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, despite a twelve percent decrease in fatal motor vehicle crashes from 2000 to 2009, New Mexico is still twenty-two percent above the national average, according to the department of transportation; and

WHEREAS, department of transportation records show that in 2009, three and two-tenths percent of all crashes in the state were related to alcohol, an issue around which there are substantial education and awareness campaigns and initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the six categories of driver error that caused

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1 more crashes than alcohol are not addressed by education or
2 awareness campaigns or initiatives; and

3 WHEREAS, department of transportation 2009 records also
4 show that approximately one-fourth of New Mexico drivers were
5 under eighteen, while about three-fourths were over eighteen;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, the United States census reveals an ongoing trend
8 of population growth in New Mexico; and

9 WHEREAS, that growth will congest traffic on streets and
10 highways and intensify the pressure on governments to move
11 traffic safely; and

12 WHEREAS, the census also reveals continuous growth in the
13 number of New Mexico drivers over the age of sixty-five; and

14 WHEREAS, according to the national highway traffic safety
15 administration, New Mexico ranked fourth in the nation in its
16 2000 through 2009 pedestrian fatality rate, only a minor
17 improvement from its previous ranking of first; and

18 WHEREAS, the league of American bicyclists recently ranked
19 New Mexico the forty-fifth state for bicycle-friendliness; and

20 WHEREAS, increasingly, drivers are distracted, traffic and
21 automobile engineering attributes are changing and roads are
22 being used in alternative ways; and

23 WHEREAS, these factors increase the risks of danger on and
24 near roadways; and

25 WHEREAS, the state has made no effort to educate drivers

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1 about these new risks or the best ways to avoid a collision;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, the state also does not offer or require
4 education for alternative road users on safety or legal
5 obligations; and

6 WHEREAS, unlike in other states, New Mexico's driver
7 education curriculum and testing practices do not incorporate
8 the findings of a growing body of research on good driving
9 habits;

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
11 OF NEW MEXICO that the taxation and revenue department be
12 requested to convene a committee to address these needs in
13 driver education and road safety; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee consist of New
15 Mexico resident and nonresident experts in traffic safety and
16 alternative road use, including pedestrian, bicycle and
17 motorcycle road use; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee also consist of
19 members from advocacy organizations active in the state,
20 including the Duke City wheelmen foundation and the New Mexico
21 motorcycle rights organization; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, if possible, one or more
23 experts in visual perception and driver habits and one or more
24 experts in driver education curriculum and testing serve on the
25 committee; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee meet monthly
2 beginning in April 2013 to establish objectives for
3 implementing a continuing driver education program that
4 addresses the concerns expressed in this memorial; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee report its
6 recommendations to the legislative health and human services
7 committee in September 2013; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
9 transmitted to the taxation and revenue department, the
10 legislative health and human services committee, the Duke City
11 wheelmen foundation and the New Mexico motorcycle rights
12 organization.